

OBITUARY — J. A. (TONY) MARSH



Malacologists and shell collectors throughout the world will be shocked and saddened to learn of the death in Brisbane, Queensland, on December 16th, 1967, of James Anthony Marsh, known affectionately to all as Tony, following a brief illness. Not long before he had been actively associated with the First Australian Shell Collectors' Convention held at Yeppoon, Queensland, jointly sponsored by the Keppel Bay Shell Club, of which he was patron, and this Society; and it is difficult to realise that so vigorous and vital a person is no longer with us.

Born in Weymouth, Dorset, on May 8th, 1913, he moved with his parents to Australia in 1927, and married Elsie Coates of Rockhampton, Queensland in 1939. His career was varied: he learned to fly and took part in the Brisbane to Adelaide air race for the Adelaide Centenary celebrations in 1936, and later became an instructor for the Royal Queensland Aero Club in Brisbane, Rockhampton and Mackay, and subsequently trained pilots during World War II. He was a farmer for some years, and eventually settled in Rockhampton in 1954 where he founded a successful motor engineering business.

Tony's interest in shells began about 1951 and he soon became a serious collector whose natural ability led him to study the taxonomy of cone shells, in which he quickly became expert. He amassed a collection of *Conus* which was certainly without equal in Australia, much of it collected personally, though he also exchanged with collectors throughout the world and he carried on a large correspondence. His knowledge of the group was such that many collectors and professional malacologists referred material to him for identification or opinion.

He published two items of importance in malacology: a paper entitled "Two new cone shells (Mollusca, Conidae) from Queensland" in this *Journal*, No. 6, pp. 40-42, pl. 4 (January, 1963) in which he described *Conus* (*Leptoconus*) *sculletti* and *Conus* (*Leptoconus*) *nielsenae*; and a book entitled "*Cone Shells of the World*", illustrated by O. H. Ripplingdale (Jacaranda Press, Brisbane, 1964, 166 pp., 22 plates) in which his views on *Conus* nomenclature are set out in full. It has proved to be a valuable aid in classifying this difficult group and will always stand as a memorial to him. Besides these two works he edited and contributed a number of articles to the magazine "Keppel Bay Tidings" published by the Keppell Bay Shell Club in recent years.

More than anything else Tony Marsh will be remembered for his kindly nature and hospitality. His home was always open to collectors and many hundreds of visitors to Rockhampton from all corners of the world will remember with pleasure the time spent in company with Tony and his family. Beside his shells, he loved music, books, good food and wine, nature, people—in fact he loved life. He is survived by his widow and five children, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy.

—Donald F. McMichael